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22 November 1961 25X1

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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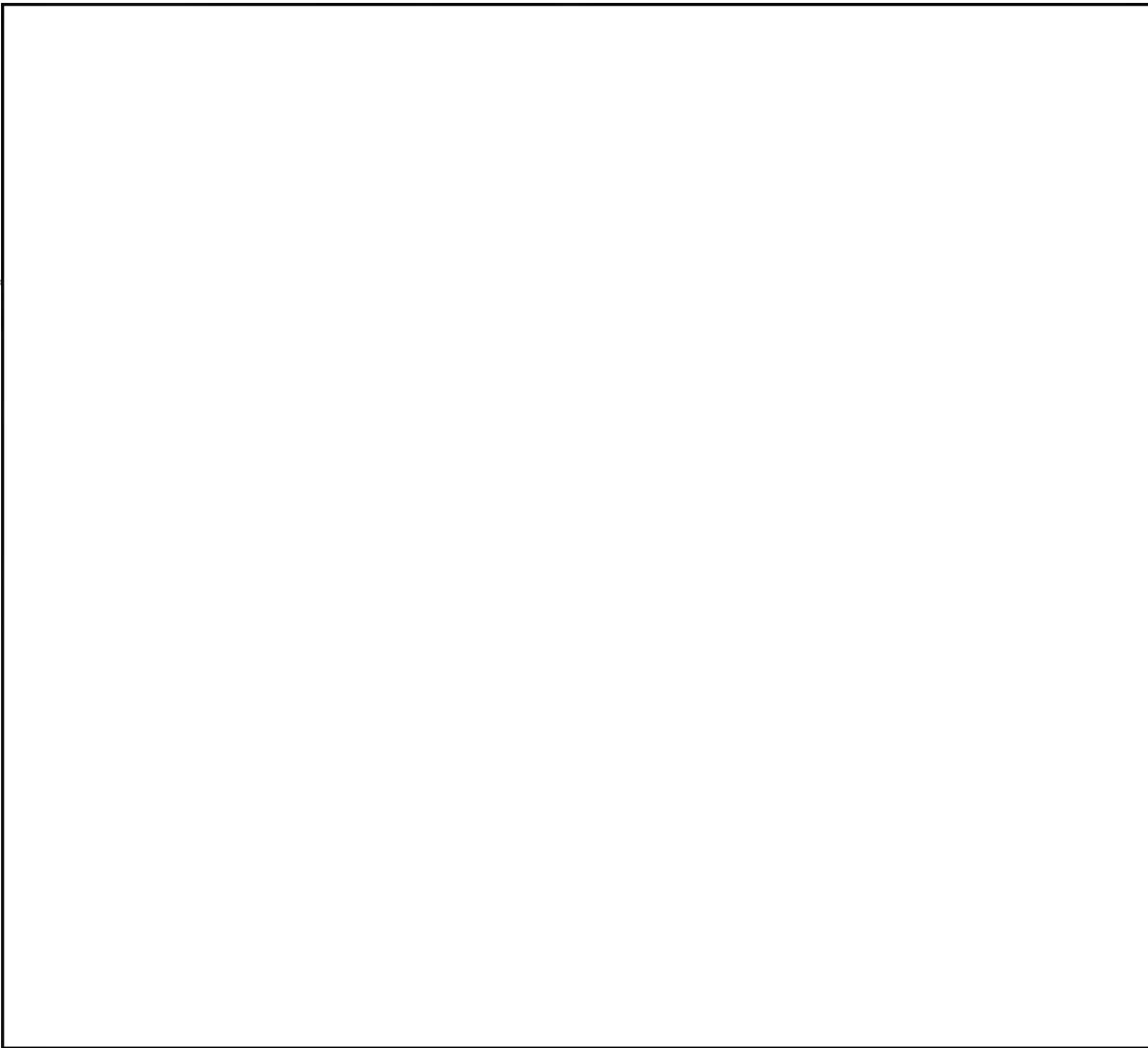
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DAILY BRIEF



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South Vietnam: Casualty figures for South Vietnamese forces in the past two months have shown a striking increase over previous monthly averages. Casualties for the whole of 1961 will probably be about 13,000, almost double last year's total. The greatest increase has been in the number killed, although the figures for wounded, captured, and desertions have also risen significantly. Losses are greatest among civil guard and self-defense forces, but the proportion suffered by the regular army is growing.

The South Vietnamese Government estimates that Viet Cong casualties in 1961 will be about 18,000, 50 percent above the 1960 figure. The disproportionate increase in the government casualty rate may be the result of more accurate reporting by government sources in an effort to publicize the scale of the Viet Cong campaign.

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USSR: There is no evidence that Moscow intends to change its position on a nuclear test ban agreement when negotiations are resumed in Geneva on 28 November. The USSR's agreement to resume negotiations appears primarily intended to offset the adverse nonbloc reaction to the recent Soviet test series and to place itself in a position to charge that continuation of the US testing program is responsible for the intensification of the nuclear armaments race. The USSR may also propose that the new round of negotiations be accompanied by a moratorium on all nuclear testing. The Soviet note drew attention to Khrushchev's remarks during the 7 November Kremlin reception at which he warned that "there will be more Soviet tests if the West goes on testing."

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France: De Gaulle's present campaign to gain broader support from the French armed services--to be climaxed on 23 November at Strasbourg when he addresses nearly 3,000 officers and noncoms assembled from France, Germany, Algeria, and overseas--has apparently not yet produced the desired effect. Officers attending the advanced military schools in Paris, who heard De Gaulle's 14 November talk stressing the armed forces' responsibility to the nation and the need for a national nuclear striking force, were reportedly disappointed over his failure to mention Algeria, NATO and other topics of interest to them.

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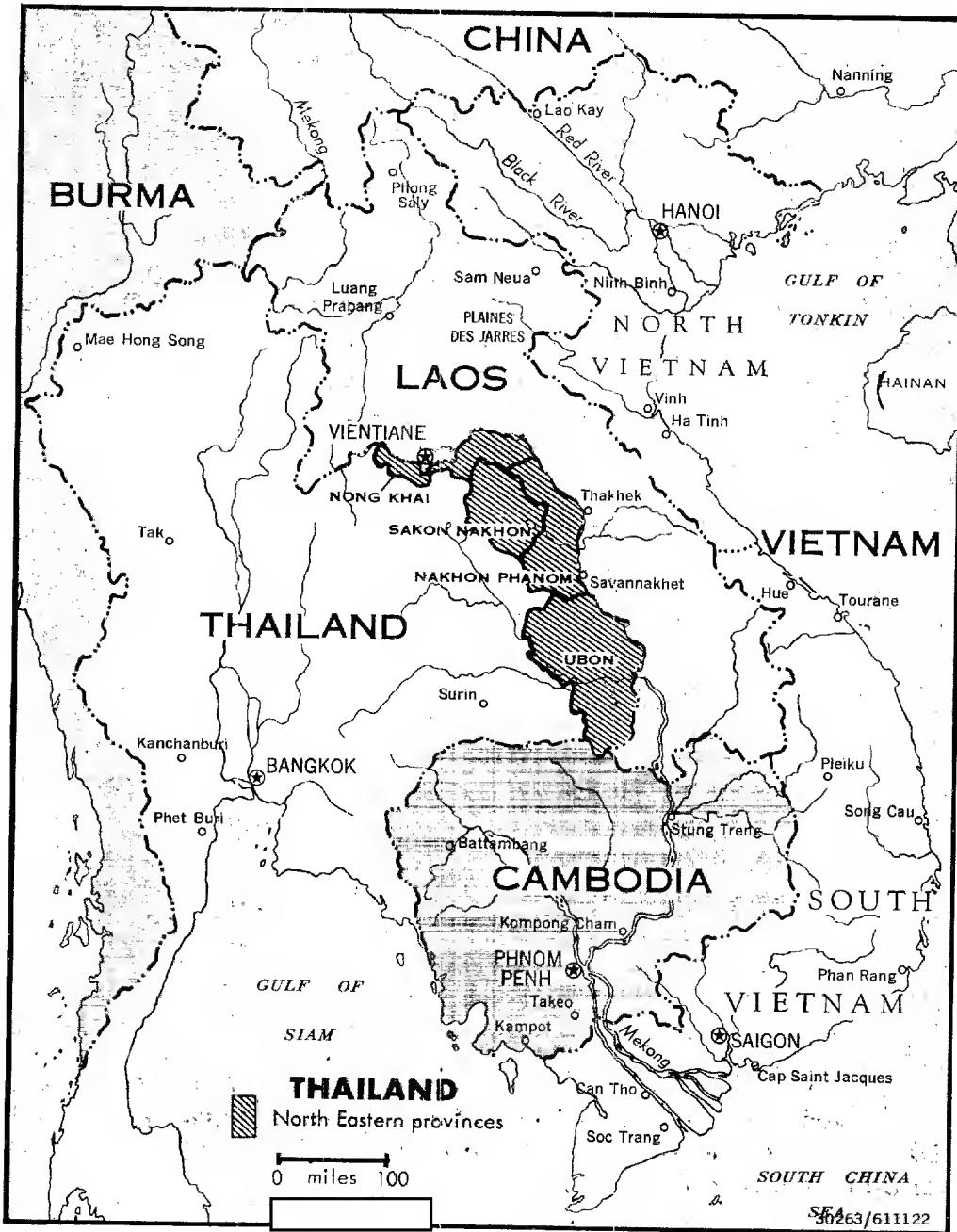
Nonaligned Nations: The talks held by Nehru, Nasir, and Tito in Cairo on 19 November apparently accomplished little other than to maintain an outward show of cooperation among [redacted]

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their three countries.

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Tito also apparently failed to get the support he desired for a program of economic cooperation among the nonaligned states. In a speech on 13 November, Tito had called for such a program as the best defense against both Eastern and Western economic organizations which, he claimed, threaten the independence of the uncommitted states. However, the communique issued at the conclusion of the three leaders' talks noted only the general need "to strengthen economic cooperation among all countries."

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Thailand: [Thai officials are increasingly concerned over Communist exploitation of unrest in the northeastern provinces.

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[Communists continue to be very active despite government efforts to suppress them, and [

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[leadership is being provided by the Pathet Lao. Prime Minister Sarit's reluctance to support the establishment of a neutral regime in Laos is linked to his fear that a neutralist government would facilitate infiltration and subversion in Thailand and to his knowledge that the population in the northeast feels closer bonds with the residents of the Mekong valley than with Bangkok.

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*Berlin: (information as of 0330 EST) According to reports from American officials in Berlin, the Communists have placed steel beams in a zig-zag pattern across the Helmstedt autobahn near the checkpoint at Babelsberg at its eastern end just before it enters West Berlin. The only purpose of this barrier as so far constructed seems to be to slow down traffic. The barrier is reported to be on the strip between the Soviet and US checkpoints and to have been constructed only on the lane incoming from West Germany. No such barriers have apparently been erected at the western end of the autobahn at Helmstedt. This reported construction is similar to the barriers put in place at the Friedrichstrasse inter-Berlin sector crossing point in connection with recent attempts by the East Berlin police to institute documentary control over official western vehicular traffic when the passengers were in civilian dress.

There have been no indications of change in the Communist position that pending a separate treaty or a negotiated settlement, allied access to West Berlin will remain under Soviet control. It is possible that the construction is simply intended as a reminder of the Soviet position that Western "procrastination" on negotiations with the USSR will result in unilateral Soviet action--a separate treaty followed by the turnover of access controls to the East Germans. However, recent actions within the city of Berlin suggest that the Communists could be preparing attempts to establish East German control over official Western autobahn travelers, proceeding to West Berlin in civilian dress.

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USSR Agrees to Resume Nuclear Test Talks

The Soviet leaders' decision to accept the US-UK proposal for an immediate resumption of the Geneva talks probably was based on the assumption that this would provide the most effective forum for exploiting any US decision to undertake atmospheric testing and for counteracting the damaging effects of the Soviet test series on the USSR's image abroad. The TASS statement of 5 November, in response to President Kennedy's 2 November statement regarding preparations for US atmospheric testing in the event such measures become necessary, charged that the US "is preparing to resume nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere."

The USSR may also believe that the resumption of test talks will enhance its recent moves to impress the West with a more flexible Soviet approach to negotiations on Berlin and Germany.

The Soviet note marks some retreat from the position the USSR has maintained since the Vienna meeting between Khrushchev and President Kennedy in June, in which the Soviet premier contended that the questions of a test ban and general disarmament should be solved "interdependently." Subsequent Soviet pronouncements implied that the nuclear testing issue could be considered only in the context of general and complete disarmament. Although Moscow has now agreed to resume separate negotiations on testing, the Soviet note sought to retain the link with general disarmament by observing that the US, Britain, and the USSR have all "proclaimed as their common goal universal and complete disarmament." It also stated that the USSR's agreement to return to the Geneva talks rests on the assumption that the UN General Assembly in the near future will "adopt a decision on the resumption of negotiations on the whole complex of questions pertaining to general and complete disarmament and on the setting up of an organ in which such negotiations can be conducted."

While the Soviet leaders have found it expedient to resume separate talks on a test ban treaty, they probably will take the position that no final agreement can be concluded unless progress is made in the general disarmament field. This position

was implied in the TASS statement of 5 November which reaffirmed the USSR's readiness to sign a general disarmament treaty, "on the basis of which nuclear weapons tests would also be discontinued once and for all. . . ." [redacted]

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Albanian Trade Probes in the West

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 Albanian economic overtures earlier this year to France and Italy, the only two West European countries with which it has diplomatic relations, have had little result. Italian firms have agreed to sell two chemical fertilizer plants--one of which reportedly was originally to have been built by the USSR--and a cargo ship. However, presumably because of severe economic difficulties and a shortage of hard currencies, Tirana has not yet concluded a 1961-62 trade agreement with Rome.

Late in October,

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 [redacted] the Albanian minister of trade offered to buy, for cash, grain and hides from Turkey and proposed that a Turkish delegation visit Albania with a view to a possible Turkish-Albanian trade agreement. Apparently there have been no results thus far from the Albanian approaches to France or Turkey.

Albania's grain production in recent years has been low, and, although this year's harvest may be better, Tirana will still have to rely on imports to satisfy its normal requirements. During the year ending 30 June, Communist China provided about 75 percent of Albania's grain imports, practically all of which Peiping purchased from free world sources.

Tirana made an attempt to sound out Washington on diplomatic relations on 28 July when Liria, organ of a Communist-dominated Albanian emigré group in the US, called for development of "diplomatic, friendly, and trade relations" with the US. Prior to that, Albanian leaders had occasionally stated their willingness to establish relations with the US--nonexistent since World War II--but followed such statements within a few days with renewed anti-US propaganda attacks.

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